JUSTICE LEAGUE®

TASK FORCE™

34 | MAY 96

PRIEST
BERNADO
NAPOLITANO
RODRIGUEZ

TOM FEHMEL

THE DEAD OF NIGHT.
A WOLF PROWLS THE HIGHLANDS SURROUNDING ZET-WERINGO.
A DESTROYER COME TO DESTROY.
WELL?

IT IS THE *DEAD* OF NIGHT, M'LORD.

THE CITYFOLK SLUMBER IN THEIR BEDS WHILE THE GUARDSMEN GROW LAX.

THE EYE OF USAF SHALL BE OURS WITHOUT DELAY. AND, EVEN SO, MIGHT I INQUIRE OF MY LORD--

--SHOULD WE NOT SEEK FIRST TO *BARGAIN* WITH THE SULTAN OF TET-WERINGO--?

--AFTER ALL, YOU WERE IN *HIS* EMPLOY NOT FOUR MOONS AGO,

Bah,

MY *LOYALTY* RENTS FOR 80 GOLD CROWN, ADDAMUS.

IT HAS THIS EVE BEEN PURCHASED BY THAT FOOL WIZARD *EBALLUM.*

MY DUTY, THEREFORE, IS TO RECOVER THIS "*EYE OF USAF*" AND FLY BACK TO EBALLUM AT THE APPOINTED TIME.

SHOULD MY FORMER EMPLOYER, THE SULTAN OF TET-WERINGO, *OBJECT*--

--I'LL *EXPLAIN* IT TO HIM.

IN *NO UNCERTAIN TERMS.*

RANGE, ADDAMUS?

TWO AND ONE-THIRD LEAGUES, M'LORD.

NO TROOP MOVEMENT. *WELL* INTO THE SECOND WATCH.

I'M GOING IN.

I'LL SNATCH THIS RIDICULOUS "*EYE*" AND LINK UP WITH YOU MEN AT VLANDAR.

"*LINK UP*," M'LORD--? ARE WE NOT GOING *WITH*--?

NO, ADDAMUS, "*WE*" *AREN'T*.

WE ARE ON A *TIGHT SCHEDULE*.

TAKE THE FELINE.

EBALLUM NEEDS HIS DAMNED *TALISMANS* IN ORDER TO CAST HIS *SPELL* ON THE *SWORD OF USAF*--

--WITH WHICH HE HOPES TO *SAVE* YOUR WRETCHED *KINSMEN* FROM IMPENDING *ANNIHILATION*.

STEALING THIS "*EYE*" IS A FOOL'S ERRAND, REQUIRING NOT SO MUCH *SKILL* AS *STEALTH*. I HARDLY NEED A *REGIMENT*.

AFTER ALL--

--WHAT COULD GO *WRONG*?

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SLAAAMM!

GRREEAAAKK

THIS IS PROBABLY NOT GOOD.

DOES THAT MEAN WE'RE NOT IN *KANSAS*, TOTO ?

SHUT UP, RAY.

ANYBODY *HURT*? ME, I MEAN--

--SINCE THE REST OF YOU GUYS ARE *UNBREAKABLE*.

GAMMERON--

--WHAT IS OUR *STATUS*?

WELL, J'ONN, THIS *LOOKS* LIKE EARTH. I MEAN IT'S RIGHT WHERE EARTH IS SUPPOSED TO *BE*--

--IT'S GOT EARTH *AIR*-- EARTH *GRAVITY*-- EARTH *VEGETATION*--

C'MON, GLENN-- SPIT IT OUT.

WELL, TRIUMPH, WHEN'S THE LAST TIME YOU SAW A *BRACHIOSAUR* --?

TIME TRAVEL.

WE'VE MESSED UP-- GONE BACK IN *TIME*.

Uh-- NO.

STAY WITH ME HERE, KIDS.

NO, I THINK FIRING THE *WARP ENGINES* IN EARTH ATMOSPHERE WAS ...UNFORTUNATE.

A *POCKET UNIVERSE*. WE HAVE PENETRATED A DIMENSIONAL VEIL TO A WORLD THAT EXISTS IN THE SAME TIME AND SPACE AS OUR OWN--

--BUT IS *RADICALLY DIFFERENT*.

A *GOLD STAR* TO THE ROCKET SCIENTIST FROM MARS !

DEVILS !!!!

--HELLO--?

LOOKS LIKE WE *SPOOKED* SOME OF THE LOCALS.

DEMONS!! WITCHES!!

TWANG

CROSSBOWS,

HOW QUAINT. NOW, ABOUT OUR WARP DRIVE--

--THESE OLD E-6'S ARE REALLY *TOUCHY.* DOESN'T TAKE MUCH TO BLOW 'EM APART.

IF WE CAN SOMEHOW GET THEM BACK ON-LINE AND *RECONSTRUCT* THE FIRING SEQUENCE THAT GOT US HERE, MAYBE--

VIP

--YEEARRRGGHH!!

FWOOMM

GAMMERON --!!

WHAT WAS *THAT--?*

SOMETHING HAS OBVIOUSLY INJURED *GAMMERON.*

WHAT--FRED AND BARNEY LOB A *BOULDER* FROM 300 FEET?! J'ONN--IT'S LIKE THE *STONE AGE* HERE!

IRRELEVANT. ASSIST *TRIUMPH--*

--I'M GOING AFTER *GAMMERON.*

FOR SELSIA!!

FOR EBALLUM!!

FOR SKARTARIS!!

SOME KIND OF DAMNED *PLASMA-*CHARGED TIP--

FZZWOOSH!

FOR CRYING OUT LOUD--!!

SKR-EEEE

LOOK OUT, WILL--THE *THIRD* ONE'S COMING BACK AT YOU.

ME?! HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S NOT COMING AT *YOU?*

'CAUSE I LOOK GOOD.

WELL, FIN-FACE, THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT.

HEY, WHITEY, WHY NOT JUST PAINT A *TARGET* ON YOUR BACK--?

THOOOOM

--OOOOOH. LOOK WHAT *WILL* DID.

THAT IS ENOUGH !!!!

ZRRRP

WE MEAN YOU NO HARM. WE WISH ONLY TO REPAIR OUR SHIP AND *LEAVE* THE WAY WE CAME.

I WILL NOT, HOWEVER, TOLERATE ANY FURTHER AGGRESSION.

ATTACK US AGAIN AT YOUR *PERIL.*

YEAH. WHAT *HE* SAID.

YOU *KILLED* THE BARBARIAN MERCENARY!

YOU HAVE *DOOMED* US!

DOOMED OUR *PEOPLE* TO *EXTINCTION!!*

DOOMED!!

DOOMED. GOT IT.

WELL, THESE THINGS HAPPEN.

LOOK, I'M GONNA PATCH UP OUR *WARP DRIVE* AND WE'LL BE ON OUR WAY.

NO OFFENSE-- THIS IS A NICE PLACE TO *VISIT*--

LOOK OUT--!!

WWRRAAAMMM!!!

KKBLAAAMMM!!!

WOW.

GAMMERON SAID THE DRIVE WAS *TOUCHY*, BUT--

THWWAACK!!

"GYPSY! THE SHIP'S GONNA BLOW!"

"GYPSY! RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!"

THANKS, YOU GUYS.

THIS IS *YOUR* FAULT, BISCUIT HEAD.

SO--THIS IS *SKARTARIS*. A WORLD OF *PERPETUAL DAYLIGHT*.

ALTHOUGH THE SUN SHINES *BRIGHTLY*--

MOMENTARILY...

--IT IS ACTUALLY THE *MIDDLE* OF THE *NIGHT.*

AYE, M'LORD. 'TIS THE STATE OF THINGS.

SKARTARIS... SKARTARIS...NOT ON ANY OF MY CHARTS, J'ONN.

EVEN IF WE *HAD* A SHIP, WE'D BE PRETTY DAMNED *LOST*--

--*HEY!* WATCH IT, KID.

'SCUSE.

WE'RE NOT *LOST*, GAMMERON, IF MY SUSPICIONS ARE CORRECT--

--THIS *IS* EARTH, WE HAVE TRAVERSED SOME *DIMENSIONAL PLANE.*

IF WE CAN FIND OR CREATE A GATE-WAY, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO RETURN TO OUR OWN WORLD WITHOUT HAVING TO TRAVEL THROUGH SPACE.

Oh, IS *THAT* ALL?

YOU MEAN I DON'T GET TO BE BLOWN OUT OF AN AIRLOCK OR ABANDONED ON AN EXPLODING SHIP--?

AND--HOW DO THESE GUYS KNOW *ENGLISH*--?

THEY DO NOT. GAMMERON IS USING HIS *UNIVERSAL TRANSLATOR.*

SO--YOU FOUR ARE *GODS*-- COME TO WREAK VENGEANCE UPON US--?

UH-- YEAH.

YEAH, OKAY. I'LL TAKE THAT.

NO, MY FRIENDS--

--MY STUDENTS AND I ARE *NOT* GODS, AS FOR WHY WE ARE HERE--

--THAT'S AN-- INTERESTING-- STORY--

DECK 19 OF THE MUNICIPAL PARKING GARAGE NEAR INTERGALACTIC CIRCUIT COURT #A33 ON THE PLANET XANTHCAR.

36 HOURS AGO...

SO, GAMMERON --LET ME SEE IF I'VE *GOT* IT--

YOU LET L-RON ESCAPE--AND *WE* GET SHOT AT. THAT ABOUT RIGHT?*

HEY, J'ONN-- *MUZZLE* THIS KID BEFORE I *FRY* HIM.

IN YOUR *DREAMS*, SPACE-MAN.

THEY'VE *TOWED* OUR BORROWED *SHIP*, J'ONN--

--WE'RE *TRAPPED!!*

S-HOCK

*AND ABOUT ALL THE RECAP FROM LAST ISH YOU'RE GOING TO SEE -- Roo

NEVER SAY *NEVER*, WILL.

OUR PRIORITY AT THE MOMENT IS TO ESCAPE THESE *COURT OFFICERS*--PREFERABLY WITHOUT SERIOUSLY *INJURING* THEM.

WE *MUST* SHOW RESPECT TO LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT.

I AGREE. I'LL BE AS *CAREFUL* AS I CAN--

--GIVEN THIS PLANET'S *INCREASED GRAVITY FIELD*. IT'S DIFFICULT TO ACCURATELY GAUGE MY ENERGY LEVEL.

ZMMMM

I BELIEVE GYPSY IS SEARCHING FOR A NEW MEANS OF TRANSPORT--

I DUNNO, WILL--SOUNDS LIKE "*MY DOG ATE MY HOME-WORK.*"

HEY--ANYBODY SEE *GYPSY*--?

"L--IN HER OWN UNIQUE WAY."

--THERE!!

HUGGHNN--!!

THUD!

HEY, PAL, DON'T LEAVE THE PARTY JUST *YET*--

--I'VE GOT A FEW *GIFTS* FOR YOU.

LEMME *GO*, YOU DIPPY TERRAN BROAD--!

"*DIPPY*"!? "*DIPPY*"?!

HEY, I'M FROM *LONG ISLAND*, BUG-FACE. I ONLY *SOUND* DIPPY.

NOT THAT IT'LL MATTER ONCE I GO TO WORK CAVING YOUR SKULL IN.

WHADDAYA WANT FROM *ME*?! I'M JUST A *PARKING ATTENDANT*!!

SURE--ONE WHO *STOLE* OUR *SHIP*.

YOU WERE *LATE.* THOSE ARE THE *RULES.*

HERE'S A NEW ONE: *NO SHIP, NO FACE.*

IT'S *GONE,* LADY! WE *FARM OUT* TOWED VESSELS FOR *SCRAP.*

I AIN'T *GOT* YOUR SHIP.

OKAY, THEN--

--WHAT *DO* YOU HAVE--?

MOMENTARILY...

WOW, GYPSY-- AN *AIR SLED.*

TO TAKE *ALL* OF US BACK TO EARTH. NEVER WOULD'VE THOUGHT OF THAT.

SHUT UP AND FOLLOW ME--THERE'S NOT MUCH TIME.

OKAY, THE *BAD NEWS* IS OUR SHIP HAS BEEN SOLD FOR SCRAP.

THE *GOOD* NEWS IS, THE PARKING GUY GAVE ME A *LEAD* ON ANOTHER CONFISCATED SHIP--ONE HE SAYS IS A *LOT* MORE ADVANCED THAN OURS.

THE HITCH IS, THEY'RE ABOUT TO *TRASH* THAT ONE TOO.

IF WE CAN GET TO IT BEFORE THEY DO, IT'S OURS.

IT SHOULD BE JUST OVER THE NEXT RISE--

--oh.

SCORE ONE FOR GYPSY.

--IT'S A *SPACE SHUTTLE!* AN EARTH ONE-- LIKE NASA!

THESE THINGS ARE BUILT FOR SHORT *ORBITS* --NOT INTERGALACTIC TRAVEL!

LOOKS LIKE WE GOT *HOSED* ON THIS ONE.

NO, RAY--ALTHOUGH THE *SHELL* IS A CLEAR *COUNTERFEIT* OF NASA DESIGN--

--THE SHIP IS *FULLY EQUIPPED* FOR LONG-RANGE TRAVEL.

IT'S A *SPACE BUS*-- A COMMERCIAL TRAVEL VEHICLE.

CAN YOU *FLY* IT?

ME? SINCE WHEN AM I GOING *ANY-WHERE* WITH YOU?

MY IMPRESSION IS THE XANTHCANS ARE FAR ANGRIER WITH *YOU* THAN *US*, GAMMERON.

...MAN'S GOT A POINT...

"FORGIVE ME, M'LORD--"

-- BUT HOW DOES *ANY* OF THAT ACCOUNT FOR YOUR ARRIVAL HERE--?

Oh... WELL...

...I'M COMING TO THAT...

EARTH. LESS THAN AN HOUR AGO...

WHAT--WHAT'S HAPPENING TO US?!?

WE'RE BURNING UP!!

HOLD ON, GYPSY-- WE'RE *REENTERING* THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE--

--AND FLYBOY UP THERE IS SCREWING UP.

SHUT UP, KID!

THIS OLD CRATE HANDLES LIKE A TOY SLED IN A MUD SLIDE.

HARD TO KEEP THE NOSE DOWN-- PICKING UP TOO MUCH FRICTION. J'ONN--

--J'ONN--?

THE SHIP IS SURROUNDED BY IT. CONSUMED BY IT.

THE MARTIAN MANHUNTER HAS NEVER DONE WELL AROUND FLAME.

NOT SINCE HIS WIFE'S DEATH.

CRAP. FORGOT ABOUT HOW FIRE AFFECTS HIM--!

HANG ON, J'ONN--I'M GETTING US OUT NOW.

HEY-- J'ONN-- ARE YOU OKAY--?

FIRE.

GONNA--TRY SOMETHING-- A LITTLE-- DICEY--

--EVERYBODY-- HANG ONTO SOMETHING--

CLAK!

"YOU SEE, WE WEREN'T COMING IN *CLEANLY*--THE SHIP WAS PICKING UP TOO MUCH *FRICTION* FROM THE EARTH'S GRAVITATIONAL FIELD.

"THE SHIP PROBABLY COULD'VE MADE IT, BUT J'ONN WAS FREAKING OUT, AND *GYPSY* PROBABLY WOULDN'T HAVE SURVIVED.

"I NEEDED A MAJOR COURSE CORRECTION. I TOOK A CHANCE--FIRED UP THE *WARP DRIVE*--

"--AND THE NEXT THING I KNEW, WE WERE PLUMMETING OUT OF YOUR SKY.

"THE CONTROLS WERE DEAD--EVERYTHING SHORTED OUT--

--AND YOU KNOW THE REST.

WE'RE REALLY SORRY ABOUT YOUR FRIEND.

THE BARBARIAN WAS *NOT* OUR *FRIEND*. HE WAS *HIRED* FOR THE DANGEROUS WORK OF COLLECTING *TALISMANS* FOR OUR WIZARD EBALLUM.

EBALLUM'S ENCHANTED *SWORD* IS OUR PEOPLE'S ONLY HOPE OF *SURVIVAL*. OUR PEOPLE ARE SLAUGHTERED DAILY BY THE HORDES OF DEVVAR.

WE ALONE DO NOT POSSESS THE *SKILL* OR *PROWESS* NEEDED TO RECOVER THE WIZARD'S ICONS.

SAY--

--YOU SAID YOU WERE *PAYING* THIS GUY--?

I'M NOT SURE WE SHOULD BE INVOLVED HERE, ADDAMUS. THIS ISN'T OUR WORLD--IT MAY NOT BE OUR *PLACE* TO INTERFERE--

BUT, WOULD WE BE INTERFERING--? ALL THEY NEED ARE THE *TOOLS* TO DEFEND *THEMSELVES*.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA. 1962.

THANKS, TRIUMPH.

GYPSY, OUR *MISSION* IS TO FIND OUR WAY HOME.

LET'S ASK J'ONN.

I WOULD RATHER ASK *HIM*.

HIM--?

WHO--?

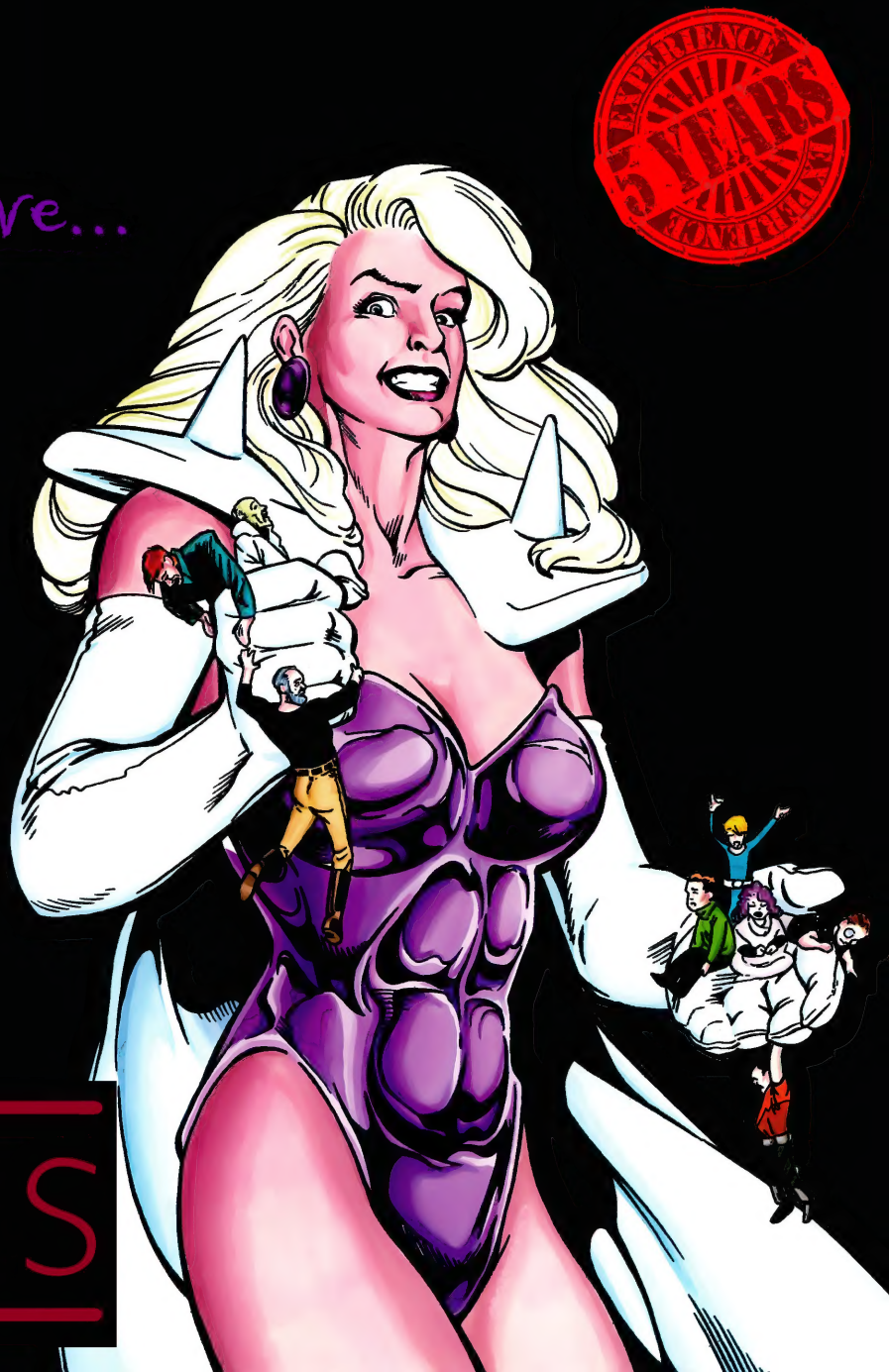
ME.

--LIEUTENANT COLONEL *TRAVIS MORGAN*, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE. SOMETIMES CALLED--

THE WARLORD

MEEE-OOOWWW.

From Baaldur, with love...



GLORITH

novus